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UNCLAS MAPUTO 000836

SIPDIS

PARIS FOR ARS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/PD (LMING); AF/S (HTREGER)

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KPAO](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [KISL](#) [MZ](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR VISITS MATOLA MUSLIM SCHOOL

1. On June 16 the Matola Muslim School (Massjid Hamza) warmly welcomed its first visit by an American ambassador. Following up on his participation in last November's Iftar hosted by the Ambassador, the school's director and the most important Imam in Mozambique, Sheik Aminudine Muhammed, gave a warm introduction in front of sixty students and faculty. He presented Ambassador La Lime, the PAO, and USAID officer with gift books. Ambassador La Lime in turn took advantage of the occasion to explain U.S. activities and objectives in Mozambique, including the desire to reach out to the Islamic community.

2. Sheik Muhammed then accompanied the Ambassador on a tour of the campus, located in suburban Maputo. During the course of the walk-through, the Sheik and various faculty colleagues waxed enthusiastic about the Ambassador's presence. They emphasized that education made up only one aspect of the institution's community functions; they also operate a morgue, mosque, a kitchen for the needy, and a radio station.

3. The visit, a part of the PA-coordinated Mission Speakers Initiative, included a lively question-and-answer session with about forty students. Students asked several direct questions, dealing with Iraq, Islam in the U.S., and homosexuality under American law. All three Americans gave interviews to Radio Imame, the local Muslim radio station that reaches a daily audience of 15,000 in the Maputo area. The PAO then toured the nearby radio station and arranged for a follow-up radio appearance. The school itself has requested an ongoing relationship with the Mission, with focus on its library, small grants, and support for English-language education.

4. COMMENT. Massjid Hamza is primarily a boarding school, grooming talented Muslim students from throughout Mozambique for leadership positions in Islamic institutions and communities. Students study for ten years and more through high school, often going years without returning home.  
DUDLEY